

As regards delay in execution, I am sure, the honourable members will not have anything serious to say about this when they meet next year during budget debate. About corruption in the department, it was said that, corruption exists in the subordinate ranks of the judiciary. I heard the same thing said in the Assembly. But there may be corruption as was painted out here and I am not in a position to deny that categorically. All the process peons in the Judicial Department may not be paragons of virtue, and I cannot say that they will not receive a pie, even if it was offered to them. Among them there may be black sheep just as there are black sheep in other Government departments. Very interesting disclosures were made in the other Chamber, and my friend here has stated that there are some process peons who have even fixed a scale of fee for serving different classes of processess. The High Court is keeping a zealous watch over the ministerial staff and any case of corruption that has been brought to its notice has not escaped punishment. I can assert and the honourable members may feel assured that not even a single case of corruption of even the Process Peons that may be brought to the notice of the Judiciary or the High Court will escape punishment.

President : The question before the House is that Government be granted a sum of Rs. 11,25,100 under Demand III—Administration of Justice.

The Demand was put and carried and the grand was made.

DEMAND IV—EDUCATION DEPARTMENT EXCLUDING TRAVANCORE UNIVERSITY.

Mr. G. Gopala Menon : Sir, I rise to move for a grant not exceeding Rs. 44,54,546 under Demand IV—Education Department excluding Travancore University.

Mr. A. Easwara Pillai (*Kottarakara and Pathanapuram cum Shencottah*) : Sir, I support the demand. In doing so, I wish to offer certain remarks regarding the administration of this department. We all know that the economic depression has greatly affected the economic condition of our people. People are striving very hard to find means of satisfying their primary needs. When penury and starvation prevail in the country, would it be possible to find the means for satisfying our cultural wants? Our Government have taken sympathetic action to obviate economic difficulties of the people of the State. But I am sorry to observe that the reduction of the cost of education in the High Schools, Government have not taken any step as yet. The cost of education in the English Schools is very high and people are not in a position to send

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their children to the English Schools. The number of boys attending the English Schools is in the decrease year by year. Something tangible must be done to minimise the difficulties of the parents who send their children to the English Schools.

In this connection I wish to make some suggestions for the reduction of the cost of education in English Schools without impairing the efficiency of instruction. My suggestion would be to abolish some classes or forms from the English Schools. Preparatory Class to the IV Form in the High Schools should be abolished and they should be amalgamated with the Vernacular Schools. English may be taught from the IV Class in Malayalam Schools and the classes in the Malayalam Schools may be extended up to the 16th Standard. Thus we can abolish the High School classes and retain only two classes. They may be designated as Pre-University classes. There, the medium of instruction should be in English. Importance may be given to English just to keep up the standard in the College classes. If my suggestion is accepted, considerable amount of school fees can be reduced without impairing the efficiency of instruction especially because the declared policy of the department is to give instruction, as far as possible, in Malayalam in English Schools.

Another point I have to bring to the notice of the Director of Public Instruction and the Government is that the retention of the VII class examination is a futile thing and it does not serve any useful purpose whatsoever. It is an unnecessary trouble to the school-going children and also a needless worry to the department. I therefore urge the necessity for abolishing that examination. The Government have declared that the VII class examination is not enough for entering the Public Service. It is not a public examination. Yet all the formalities of a public examination are retained unnecessarily. This causes considerable hardship and loss to the parents.

Then I wish to bring to the notice of Government another matter. The department is labouring under some inexplicable difficulty as there is no fixed rule or code. Though there is a code written at the time of Dr. Mitchell, it has become antiquated. The provisions of this code are more or less ignored and new rules are made in their places; but they are not yet compiled. I have put in an interpellation as to whether the code is revised and whether the compilation work is going on. I have not yet received any reply to that. So the immediate attention of the department must be bestowed upon the compilation of the code so that the rules are made known to the department and the public. There is no uniformity of procedure in the different divisions. Division authorities do things according to their whims and fancies.

Mr. M. Govindan (*Nominated*): Sir, I support the demand; but I wish to add that the demand is inadequate to meet the actual requirements of the situation. No doubt, the sum of Rs. 44,54,546 is a considerable sum. But it will be noticed that, instead of an increase year after year in the expenditure on education to meet the growing demand, there has been a gradual decrease with a view to economy. The underlying feeling must be that there should be retrenchment in this field also as in other fields.

President: Does the Hon'ble member suggest that there has been any retrenchment?

Mr. M. Govindan: There is not the increase that was expected in this department. That is what I mean.

Mr. M. Govinda Pillai: May I draw the attention of the member that the expenditure on account of Colleges has now been debited to the University and not to Education?

Mr. N. Govindan: That may be an explanation. The figures show that the allotment is not as large as it was expected. What I am saying is based upon the educational needs of the country. Looking at the figures for elementary education in the State, what we find is that although there is a slight increase in the number of boys attending the IV class in 1113 as compared to 1109, when we come to the V class, the figure is very low indeed although there is a slight increase. Out of 1,97,000 students that enter the first class, only 31,000 reach the V class. I submit that the figures are appalling. What a degree of waste? The expenditure that is meant for those boys who enter these classes is wasted in respect of 1,50,000 odd students. That is to say, if we are spending Rs. 16,00,000 on primary education, a little more than 1/5 of the number of boys alone derive the benefit of literacy. I submit Sir, that only after the completion of five years' education in a Vernacular School can a boy be considered literate. Otherwise they lapse into illiteracy. Out of more or less Rs. 16 lakhs—I am subject to correction—that we are spending on elementary education, less than Rs. 5 lakhs are actually utilised for acquisition of literacy and Rs. 10 lakhs are simply thrown into the Arabian Sea. The attempt at solving illiteracy has failed.

Mr. Kallur Narayana Pillai: മലയാളത്തിൽ ചേരുന്നവരെ കൂടാതെ മലയാളത്തിൽ പാസാകുന്നവർ ഇംഗ്ലീഷ് സ്കൂളുകളിൽ ചേരുന്നില്ലേ?

Mr. M. Govindan: Some may have gone, but the number of those who are admitted to the English School is much less than 31,000.

President : Does the hon'ble member mean that what may be called graduated system of primary education should be aimed at and is it the benefit of that system that he is hoping for ?

Mr. M. Govindan : I am just now thinking of securing the full fruition of spending this large amount for spreading literacy in this land.

President : What is the use of reducing illiteracy for one month, two months or one year when illiteracy will recur at the end of a few years, when everything that has been learnt will be forgotten ?

Mr. M. Govindan : I am a great believer that whatever be the utility of this education, literacy by itself acquired is a great achievement and will be of great use to future life.

President : Does not the honourable member concede that people who have acquired literacy forget the whole thing at the end of two or three years ?

Mr. M. Govindan : That question has been raised very often and the general understanding is that if after 5 years of Vernacular education a young man has the opportunity to read books from a library,—and the library scheme is a supplement to education—then literacy will become permanent. Otherwise this literacy may become useless and the young man after leaving school may lapse into illiteracy by being out of touch with reading matter.

Properly supplemented by a scheme of itinerant libraries that go from village to village and stationed at one village for a few months as recommended in the Statham report the literacy acquired in 5 years may last. This recommendation was not given effect to by Government. This is a supplementary scheme of education which should be adopted in order to make literacy permanent in the State. My point is only this, Sir. We should not throw away money for a purpose which is not achieved and even if a little additional amount has to be spent to secure a permanent benefit we should not stint that. My friend Mr. Eswara Pillai was making the suggestion that the VII class Government examination should be abolished. I am directly opposed to it, Sir. And it is for the very reason which he advanced namely utility. He is under the impression that the VII class examination is a mere waste and it does not serve any useful purpose. The honourable member says that it does not offer any proper standard or qualification for admission in the Government services. In the menial service, Sir, considering the educational status of this country, it is quite possible for us to insist that every man should pass at least 7th class examination for a peon's or a process server's place, or a constable's place. And if those who are pleading for communal representation see that there is a handicap for

some of those communities, some special concessions should be shown to those communities. And I am under the impression that the 7th class is a proper standard to reach for attaining competency for a peon's or a process server's place.

Mr. A. Eswara Pillai : Will that be a sufficient qualification for a constable's place in the Police Department ?

Mr. M. Govindan : Yes, and I know that the I. G. P. gives preference to the candidates who have passed the 7th class examination. Preference can be similarly given to those who have passed the 7th class examination in other departments also.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla : Sir, I want to make some observations on a few points in opposing the demand. The first point that I want to stress is that the Education Department should be in touch with all progressive developments in education. So far as our education is concerned, as Mr. Easwara Pillai stated, we are still living on the old education Code of Dr. Mitchell. When Mr. Statham was the Director, the present Pro-Vice Chancellor was made the Deputy Director, I am told, in order to give effect to the suggestions and recommendations made in the report of the Statham Committee. He became the Pro-Vice Chancellor and Mr. Menon is now the Director in his place. Except in the scrapping of a few primary schools here and there, I don't think that any attempt has been made to give effect to what was suggested in the Report. Mr. Statham's suggestions were very useful. I also feel along with other speakers here except with Mr. Govindan, that our education would progress along right lines if we work on the basis of that Report. The Malayalam middle schools and the English middle schools may be combined profitably and the fees in English middle schools may be reduced and be brought to a level with what is obtaining in the Malayalam Schools. As Mr. Statham said, we may have an examination at the IV form stage. A diversion may be made here. Some may go for higher education and others if they choose may go for vocational education. And those poor students who go for higher studies must be helped by liberal scholarsnips.

Mr. C. V. Chandrasekharan (Pro Vice-Chancellor) : May I know whether the honourable member is aware that the Statham Report is not in favour of the amalgamation of English and Vernacular Schools ?

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla : Sir, I am also aware of it. But I am free to suggest my own charges, I think.

(Mr. G. Narayana Iyer rose to put a question.)

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla : Sir, if I am interrupted constantly I will not be able to finish my speech within the allotted time.

President : But I am here to interrupt those interruption.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla : Now, I come to the question of freedom to teachers in the matter of imparting education. I want to explain that further. Sir I have to tell a few words about the way in which the Inspectors go to these educational institutions and conduct their inspections. An Inspector goes to these schools with a rod—not for terrifying the teachers and pupils—but for measuring the Boards of the classes and the sheds in which these classes are held. If the length of the Board does not come up to a certain mark, even though the deficiency is within an inch, he makes a remark in his diary takes it as an excuse for withdrawing the grant enjoyed by the institution. He even measures the benches, desks and the chairs. If any deficiency is found, immediately he recommends the withdrawal of the grant. If he had some training to measure the heads of our children or their teachers he could do that and it is somewhat reasonable. Then there is another thing which they do, or rather overdo. The clerk of the Inspector audits the books which the auditor had already examined and checked. Why this is done twice, I cannot understand. There is yet another question. The periods of work fixed for the schools is 5 hours, with an interval of one hour between 12 and 1. We know some of our children cannot go to their houses, take their meals and return within this one hour. By given 15 minutes more they may be able to do this. But the rule is insisted on. Now, there is the order that the classes should begin exactly at 9.30 A. M. and close at 3.30. The people of Travancore are educated and they find it easy to evade this rule. The clock, after all, is at the disposal of the headmaster and 10'o clock in one place may be 9 in another. Sir, I want the Department to give them freedom to adopt what they consider to be the best arrangement in this matter. If by these rules men are kept under freedom which is a great educational factor is lost to them to the detriment of the intellectual growth of the children. If we are hedged around by rules and restrictions without even allowing us to adjust our time by 10 or 15 minutes, real progress in education will suffer. Sir, the same stringent rules are made with regard to the attendance of pupils in schools. We are not allowed to take our pupils on trips outside for the sake of widening their knowledge of men and things. But in the Madras Presidency it is not so. I asked the headmaster of the Madanapally High school about this and he told me that if he takes his pupils on an education trip the Department gives them credit for that. If such a thing happens here in any of the schools, the Director would surely write to the management for an explanation why the recognition of his school cannot be stopped.

President : You have got two minutes more.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla : Sir, now I come to another grievance. There was an order, two years ago that the teachers in aided schools would be drafted to the governmental institutions. We made representations after that order and nothing substantial has come out of it except the appointment of one man in a Government school. The Director said in answer to our representation that the claims of these aided school teachers can only be considered after the teachers in departmental schools are promoted to higher places. Sir, I want also to submit that the present rule, fixing 75 per cent. attendance as the minimum should not be given retrospective effect as it will cause much disappointment to a great number of pupils.

Mr. A. Gopa'la Menon : Can Mr Kuruvilla assure me that neither the managers nor the school authorities were aware of the rule that 15 working days should be observed every month from September 1938.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla : Sir, I cannot answer that question. I know they are aware of the percentage of attendance for the year. Sir, I submit that the rule should not have any retrospective effect.

Mr. Kottoor Kunjukrishna Pillai : Sir, I wish to make a few observations regarding this department. The one fact on which we are priding ourselves has been the high percentage of our literacy. I think, compared with other parts of India, we may legitimately pride ourselves in our high standard of literacy. But when we compare ourselves with other countries in Europe we find that the percentage of literacy is not anything of which we need be satisfied. (*Hear hear*) Therefore, Sir, as has been pointed out, it is very necessary for Government to make up their mind as to the ways and means of making primary education compulsory, so that we may have if not the maximum percentage of literacy, as high a percentage as possible. I say it is necessary, not merely from the educational point of view but from the political point of view also, the raising of the standard of literacy has become a matter of urgent necessity. Sir, it has been almost accepted by the premier political organisation or the person who guides the premier political organisation in British India that literacy should be the test or qualification for the exercise of franchise. I am one, who is not in favour of adult franchise, simply because an ignorant adult is in no way better to exercise his right of franchise than a person who is not an adult but who could discriminate and exercise their discrimination, in choosing the right representative. This question is becoming more and more important. As has been pointed out by the honourable member Mr. M. Govindan, there is a good deal of waste and it is no use trying to increase the standard of literacy without taking proper care for the prevention of the lapses into

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illiteracy, and that is a very big scheme. We cannot do that, perhaps, without additional taxation. It may be said that for a moral reform like prohibition it is very good to tax people by all means possible. How much more is it necessary, I ask, that if we want to make the citizens of our country capable of exercising the ultimate right of citizenship, to impose fresh taxation? But when the question of taxation comes, it is not faced and we often glibly talk about the introduction of compulsory education, adult education. The cost is enormous and prohibitive. That fact we have to realise. If we realise that, we should be prepared to pay for educating our children in the secondary courses and for the purposes of higher education it is well and good that we talk of compulsory primary education. We must be prepared to pay heavily for the purpose of secondary education and higher education. Without recognising that responsibility it is no use talking of compulsory education and universal literacy and all the rest of it. That point has been considered very carefully and, I for one, think that we should not shirk the expenditure for higher education and we should not shirk taxation if we would have compulsory primary education. If we are to advance in any way, politically we are in need of a higher standard of literacy. Therefore, we must be prepared for greater expenditure in regard to the primary section of our education. I am of that definite view, Sir.

I have also to speak about the amalgamation of English and Vernacular education as has been suggested by my honourable friend Mr. Easwara Pillai. I may say that I am at one with him and that some sort of amalgamation is necessary if we do not want to duplicate the expenditure on education. This is a matter that has to be seriously considered.

With regard to the raising of the standards of secondary education, it may be said that it must be done in such a way that a student, after the end of his course of secondary education, will be fit enough to undertake some branch of independent vocational education and that the exceptional few will be allowed to enter the portals of the University. Though it is not quite a relevant matter when I talk of the Education Department to speak of the University, I must say that I am not satisfied that the University is fixing the proper high standards in regard to the recruitment of students into the university classes in all colleges. It may be said that there will be an outcry. But I think it is time for the University to disregard such an outcry and stand up for really high standards. As far as I have been able to understand, the purpose

for which the University is constituted is to stop the rush of the inefficient elements into our University classes. There is no use, after declaring our purpose to be that, to say that there will be an outcry and to encourage admission of students for the purpose of allaying public discontent or agitation. We have to frame our policy with reference to the aims and ends and we should not deviate from our goal in order to satisfy the clamour of the people. That is the only observation that I have to make with regard to this subject. Even in the matter of promotions from the School Final Class and the University Classes, I am not sure whether these high standards are maintained. A particular number of students are expected to pass and that is somehow made up. We have to reorganise our conception with regard to the standards that we have to maintain. I may have something to speak about college education when we come to the demand for the University. Another point that I want to suggest is regarding the private schools which has come up for discussion here. About Rs. 11 lakhs are spent by way of grant-in-aid to private institutions. We have heard the cry of communal representation in the Education Department as in other departments. We also come to realise that the cry, however much it has been resisted, is by the mere repetition of it, gathering strength and is being accepted in many ways, in many departments. Even in the Education Department it is being admitted. We have to face that fact also. Regarding the plea that of all departments, in the Education Department the teachers may be taken on the so-called minimum qualifications and that they must be recruited on the basis of the percentage of the population of particular communities, I may say, that if communal representation is accepted, the people who are employed in the private schools, whose only difference is that they do not earn a pension and whose pay is drawn out of the grant paid by the Government, must be given adequate and proper consideration.

Another point I wish to state is that certain communities have been asked to forego 50 per cent of their due share, because at one time they entered the public service in such large numbers that they are found to be out of proportion to their population at the present time. (*Bell*) Sir, I shall finish in a minute. If some communities can be punished for that, those communities that have got grants-in-aid should also be made to forego their share in the matter of grant-in-aid schools.

Mrs. Abernam Gnanasikamony: Sir, I support this demand. It is admitted on all hands that many of the privately managed schools are very efficiently conducted than the departmental schools. In view of that fact such well-conducted and efficiently

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managed schools should get more encouragement by way of grants.

Sir, I think co-education in Vernacular High Schools and English High Schools and Middle Schools should be discouraged because the boys and girls there work under very many disadvantages. The girls in those schools get no training in physical exercise. They cannot take part in any games. I know personally that the girls who come from the boys' schools do not know—even know—the elementary principles of physical exercise. In the girls' schools it is found that the girls who come from mixed schools are far below the standard than those who have continued their study in the girls' schools from the lower classes.

It is desirable that the present Girls' High Schools should continue under the Inspectress. We wish that the statement of the Director of Public Instruction that there is a steady progress of female education in the State will continue to be true.

It is noticed that in some areas there is overlapping of High Schools. This leads to unhealthy competition.

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi: I support the demand. In doing so, I wish to bring to the notice of the House the fact that there is a tendency, unavoidable as it is, to neglect secondary and primary education since the beginning of our University. But, our finances remaining what they are today, Government, I am afraid, with the best of intentions, cannot provide more funds for education. We have to devise fresh methods of financing our education. An education cess is out of the question now. I would suggest to Government to exert their influence and to entrust all our secondary schools to private agencies, keeping one or two model schools and taking care that none of the schools are entrusted to any denominational interests. I have also to suggest that the State should concentrate its attention on elementary education. I have pointed out several times—I did so yesterday, and I shall repeat it today—that the condition of the building of most of our elementary schools, departmental schools, is very deplorable; there is lack of furniture in most of them. Government must start at least with providing the necessary furniture and necessary buildings, as a beginning; they can, even immediately, take up the schools on the main central road and the other roads in the State. Because, Sir, after all, even in bigger countries, they take particular care to see that tourists, visitors, do not see what the Government of the countries do not want the visitors to see. I am saying this to point out that

he condition of our elementary schools is so poor and should not be neglected, by the side of more spectacular educational effort on the part of the State.

Another important subject to which I would invite the attention of the House is this. There has been a cry for the spread of Hindi. I think, to come into line with the rest of India, we have to give some recognition to that language.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai : May I know, from the honourable member, which other Government has introduced Hindi in its schools ?

Mr. Kochikal P. Balakrishnan Tampi : I would only refer the honourable member to the quinquennial report of the Government of India, on Education ; that is a very comprehensive report and will give all available information on the matter. I am only pointing out that Hindi might be made an optional subject.

Sir, the Government of Travancore should, at the same time, take care to see that Tamil is made compulsory in all the schools ; because, till about 30 or 40 years ago, Tamil formed the basis of the literary education and culture of the Malayalee, and in their political and trade relations, the Malayalees have certainly much more in common with the people of the neighbouring districts than with the people of the U. P. or the distant Punjab ; and the English spoken or written by the Malayalee is far more commendable, much better than that of the U. P. man or that of the Punjabi. And, in any federal, inter-provincial, or inter-statal matter, at any rate for the next 2 or 3 years, it will surely be a handicap to us if we attempt to talk in a language which we are just now beginning to study. From that point of view, it will be better if we pay more attention to a language which we can study with very little effort, as naturally as ducks take the water. Therefore, Sir, giving due prominence to English, let us learn the language of our neighbours. That is very easily done, if attempted in the elementary schools.

Mr. A. Gopala Menon : Sir, I am thankful to the honourable members for their several constructive suggestions, and for the accuracy of information which they have displayed in discussing matters educational on the floor of this House. I am however constrained to join issue with them on very many important points, too numerous, I am afraid, to be discussed in the course of the few minutes for which I have permission to speak.

President : You have 13 minutes at your disposal.

Mr. A. Gopala Menon : Thank you, Sir.

First and foremost, I shall deal with the suggestion for the reduction of the cost of education in English schools. Sir, I have

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listened with great interest and profit to the suggestions made in that connection for the amalgamation of the lower classes of the English schools and the middle classes of the Malayalam schools. One honourable member went even to the extent of suggesting the amalgamation of classes 8 and 9 with them as a further step for the acquisition of accurate knowledge of the mother tongue. Sir, these suggestions are worthy of careful consideration; and I promise to the House that they will be carefully considered. But, I have serious doubts as to the practicability, especially at this juncture, of any further reduction in the cost of education in English schools.

First of all, we cannot ask for reduction of school fees in the higher classes, and at the same time ask for a variety of educational facilities, particularly in the field of vocational courses, or advocate the need for compulsory primary education. The cost of primary education, if it is to be made compulsory, or at any rate if it should be comprehensive enough to include all children of school-going age, has been investigated in outline by me. I find that, taking the figures of the last census (1931) as the basis and allowing for an increase of population, the possible number of school-going children for whom provision will have newly to be made is 4 1/2 lakhs. As a matter of fact, calculations show that, although on the whole about 15 per cent. of the whole population are in schools, colleges or other educational institutions, we have only about 65 per cent. of juveniles attending schools; and in regard to a proportion of these, as honourable members are aware, the conditions under which they are accommodated, the circumstances under which they attend schools, and similar facts are too well-known to be explained here. Accommodation is insufficient; furniture is not adequate; and provision of teachers is not also what one could boast of. Therefore, in making arrangements for accommodating all the children of school-going age in primary schools, we have to make provision for at least 5 more lakhs of pupils; and, according to my calculations, it may involve—without going into details—about Rs. 25 lakhs of capital investment and about Rs. 20 lakhs of recurring expenditure. A more optimistic calculation, relying upon the possibility of private managements coming to the rescue, tells me that a minimum recurring expenditure of Rs. 16 lakhs will be required for providing compulsory primary education. Sir, in the face of that problem, may I ask the honourable members, who represent the enlightened public of Travancore, whether we should now insist upon a reduction of school fees and thereby save Rs. 2 or three lakhs, and leave Government to face the problem of compulsory primary education with restricted resources, or whether we should leave things as they are and enter upon a serious and well-planned schemes of compulsory primary education to be attained in the course of 5, 7 or 10 years? Sir, I would any day vote for the latter, being myself a Travancorean. (*Hear, hear.*)

Sir, another point raised in the course of the discussion was academic freedom, and that, in the eyes of my honourable friend Mr. Kuruvilla, according to his stipulation, is something absolutely different from my point of view. Sir, I am one who regrets and has regretted very long, that Mr. Kuruvilla did not belong to, or rather Travancore had not the good fortune of having him in an administrative capacity in the Education Department of the State. If he had had that experience he would have forgiven many of the mishaps he has been complaining of, and he would not have levelled many of the charges he has now levelled against the department. He would not have accused the Inspector for devoting a large part of his time during visits to schools in the examination of the school records and account books. Sir, the Inspector, the foolish man that he is, is observed with the idea that most of the private schools keep two sets of account books, and are not always above board. (*Hear, hear*) In regard to the Assistant Inspectors also, it is true that some of them are compelled to peep behind the school walls and to look underneath the school benches because, a special grant is made for equipments and, in these matters, if the department is not wide awake, there are the honourable members of this House to draw the attention of Government to such remissness. I hope Mr. Kuruvilla will excuse this kind of mischievous curiosity on the part of the departmental officers.

Mr. V. S. Arumukham Pillai: What has the Statham Committee stated in their report, about our private schools?

Mr. A. Gopala Menon: That report was our eye-opener. Sir, if I unfold the unwritten chapters of that report I would be unfolding a tale which, as a Travancorean and as an officer of Government, I would rather not. Mr. Kuruvilla asked for academic freedom to fix school hours, intervals, vacations, etc. If that is granted, the poor Inspector, when he visits a school, will not find any work going on there. The Director himself has had such experience, of going to one or two institutions on days when they were supposed to work, only to return disappointed as the institutions were closed on those days; as a matter of fact, the unfortunate Director had to lose his T. A. for his journeys to those schools.

Mr. K. K. Kuruvilla: May I ask whether a difference of 15 minutes in the working hours of a school is likely to affect the inspection work?

Mr. A. Gopala Menon: Fifteen minutes may not make any difference at all. But, my apprehension is in regard to the question of granting absolute freedom to the managements to regulate their school hours; that will give room for discrimination and difficulties. The two hours' noon interval on Fridays has given room for complaint from the poor teachers; and to make long intervals the general rule cannot be thought of. My point is that to allow departures in this matter would mean difference between one school and another and lack of uniformity.

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Mr. Kuruvilla would like to have the privilege of sending students out on exchange. Sir, I shall be the last person to oppose any such scheme of free intercourse between our students and the students outside, in India or anywhere else in the world. But when students do not put in their appearance in schools on working days, it is not an unwarranted conclusion that they have not gone anywhere else except their houses, if there is not adequate proof to show that the pupils had been taken on excursion or sent to different or better equipped institutions. Whenever any really useful departure is contemplated, I shall be the first person to grant the necessary permission.

Something was said about the recruitment of teachers to departmental schools, from private schools; that question was raised elsewhere also. I shall explain our practical difficulty in the matter. As Mr. Kottur Kunjukrishna Pillai pointed out, there is the ever-present problem of communal representation; and there is the very difficult question of fixing the grades, ranks and salaries of these private school teachers, when they are recruited to the departmental schools. These are matters which have to be deeply gone into and examined by the Public Service Commissioner before anything can be done. I am therefore not in a position to give any guarantee in the matter; but, ordinarily, there is absolutely no difficulty in the way of the recruitment of the teachers in private schools to the departmental schools. The Government cannot go back on the principle of communal rotation and the proper method of selecting a few men every time from such a large number of aspirants as are found in private schools has also to be devised. I will be very glad to support such a proposition, provided all the other conditions are settled, that teachers in private schools should be given preference over raw men for recruitment to the departmental schools.

Sir, one word more, with your permission, regarding the retrospective order affecting grants. Mr. Kuruvilla has spoken with considerable knowledge of this particular situation. I may say, Sir, that it was not done with any intention of hitting anybody. Owing to the helplessness of departmental officers in controlling institutions under them, without a general regulation of school work, a uniformity had to be prescribed in the matter of attendance. A monthly or annual average is no good. An inspecting officer, when he goes to a school on a particular day, must know how many classes there are and what the percentage of attendance is in each class. During my personal inspection, I have been told that local

marriages and fasts and feasts have been the cause of poor attendance in the classes. On subsequent enquiry, I have been told that even without these festivals, fasts and feasts, the attendance has always been low. It was to check such evasions that the rule was introduced.

During the disturbances in August and September 1938, conferences were held in the Office of the Director of Public Instruction with the managers of schools, and also by the Divisional Inspectors with other school authorities; and at these conferences the point was emphasised, reiterated and well stressed that every school should work at least fifteen days in the month and that every day of work should have normal attendance, meaning thereby the attendance laid down in the Code. In April of this year the Inspectors, on the eve of the distribution of grants to schools, wrote and asked the Director of Public Instruction how this order could be enforced. The Director then replied that those schools which have not the required attendance and the required minimum of days of work should forfeit the aid to the particular class that had defaulted. That, Sir, is the history of the whole thing. I fail to see any retrospectiveness in that order. All managers were made fully aware of this provision. Of course, I can sympathise with their difficulties; and such difficulties as occur later, and about which previous intimation has been given to the inspecting officers at the time these lapses take place, I am fully prepared to consider, and to show whatever lenency is possible in the circumstances. That is the position in regard to the order.

The question that Government be granted a sum of Rs. 44,54,546 under Demand IV—Education Department excluding Travancore University was put and carried. The grant was made.

The House adjourned at 5-30 P. M.

A. GUNAMONY.

19th October 1939.

Secretary to the Sri Chitra State Council.